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# *Boston Globe* Reaction mixed to Harvard case

By Richard Higgins  
Globe Staff

The resignation of professor Nadav Safran as head of Harvard University's Center for Middle Eastern Studies after a probe of his links to the Central Intelligence Agency drew mixed reactions yesterday, with some criticizing Harvard for not acting more quickly and more forcefully.

"I think the report was pretty fair, and those calling for harsher judgment miss the point, which is that it reinforces the principle of academic freedom and openness," said Joseph Nye, professor of government at the John F. Kennedy School.

However, one of Safran's colleagues, Richard N. Frye, a founder of the Center For Middle Eastern Studies, said the report did not adequately address the moral issues involved. He also said the decision to allow Safran to re-

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# Reaction is mixed to Harvard case

■ SAFRAN

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main until the end of the academic year was "a mistake that will continue to hurt the center."

The report, written by A. Michael Spence, dean of the faculty of Arts and Sciences, will do little to dispell the "aura of mistrust" that has developed in Middle Eastern countries toward Harvard as a result of the Safran affair, said New York University professor Dale Eickelman. An anthropologist, Eickelman is head of the ethics committee of the 1800-member Middle Eastern Studies Assn.

In the six-page report officially released yesterday, Harvard found that Safran erred by not initially disclosing that he had received CIA money for a scholarly conference last fall, and stated that he would resign as head of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies in July.

The report follows a three-month review to determine whether Safran followed university guidelines when he accepted two CIA grants totaling more than \$150,000.

It also found that Safran acted properly in reporting a book contract financed with CIA funds. In connection with the book contract, it found Harvard's faculty of Arts and Sciences at fault for not enforcing its own research guidelines.

Safran yesterday said that Harvard's investigation into his CIA ties exonerated him and "confirmed" his basic account of his handling of two CIA contracts. He also implicitly criticized Harvard for taking three months to complete its report, during which he said he suffered "pain" from "hasty" and "patently false allegations" by his colleagues and in the press.

In an interview, Safran also said he would "weigh carefully" arguments that, because of the volatile nature of the region they study, centers for Middle Eastern studies should adopt more stringent policies concerning intelligence agency funding.



NADAV SAFRAN  
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But the embattled 60-year-old professor, a former Israeli who became a naturalized US citizen in 1962, argued that "scholars are also citizens" and have a duty to render service to the government, including its intelligence agencies, in their fields of specialty. This, he said, was a contribution to the "protection of the freedoms they enjoy."

In October, it was disclosed that Safran had accepted \$45,700 from the CIA for a conference on Islamic fundamentalism without first notifying the university or conference participants.

Harvard guidelines do not prohibit CIA sponsorship of research but require full disclosure of the source of research funds to the university, and in the case of institutional grants, to other scholars involved in the research and in any published results.

Safran acknowledged the conference funding only after ordered to do so by Spence, who permitted the conference to go on under the CIA sponsorship.

The Spence report stated that Safran notified Henry Rosovsky, then the dean of the faculty, that he had signed a \$107,000 contract with the CIA to support the writ-

ing of a book on Saudi Arabia. Rosovsky said yesterday that "Safran submitted the letter to my office and my office did not send a reply. That as an administrative error and I regret it."

"What we have here," said NYU's Eickelman, "is not just a disclosure problem, but something more much more fundamental. Middle Eastern scholars must base their relationships with their colleagues and sources on a basic trust, and there is a perception in the Middle East that this Harvard incident is just the tip of an iceberg. I'm afraid it is going to take a long time for anyone associated with Harvard to work as openly and as effectively in the Middle East as they might have previously."

John Shattuck, Harvard's vice president for public affairs, said the Spence report dealt with more than just the technical issues of compliance with university guidelines. He the report was "purposefully devoid of rhetoric." Instead, he said, it was a "careful and specific application of serious and longstanding policies" that address the broader issue of how to prevent academic freedom from being abridged by research support from intelligence agencies.

While insisting that the report "confirmed" his account of the CIA contracts, Safran said, "I recognize I made a mistake in judgment in not informing [the conference participants] as soon as the CIA funding came into the picture, ... and I attempted to repair the damage by doing so before the conference began."

Safran said he regretted "the long period of uncertainty" during the investigation, during which "a lot of people fished in troubled waters and made hasty judgments and condemnations."

"I would have thought that as a member of the faculty for 27 years that ... I was entitled certain measure of credibility would have made inquiry less painful. The prolongation of inquiry gave credence to allegations that were patently wrong and cruel. I felt a great deal of anger about that."

## Education

### Unhappy Times in Cambridge

*A Mideast scholar loses a directorship over CIA funding*

**A**fter wrestling through the fall with some nasty allegations about the integrity of one of its scholars, Harvard announced a resolution last week that satisfied no one. In a carefully worded statement, Dean A. Michael Spence disclosed that Professor Nadav Safran would resign this summer as director of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, after a ten-week investigation into his acceptance of CIA money to support both a scholarly conference and his book.

Against university rules, said Spence, Safran had invited Middle East scholars from the U.S. and abroad to a symposium on Islamic fundamentalism, to be held at the center on Oct. 15-16, without first telling either Harvard or the guests that the CIA had contributed \$45,700 toward the conference. Moreover, Safran's recently published book, *Saudi Arabia: The Ceaseless Quest for Security*, had been underwritten in part by a CIA grant of \$107,430, conveyed under a contract granting the agency review and censorship of the manuscript. When, a week before the conference, word leaked out about the CIA backing, Safran notified the guests. A number of them canceled plans to attend. Three of the center's six-man executive committee demanded Safran's resignation. The campus erupted in an angry colloquy about Government control of research, and Harvard turned crimson in embarrassment.

Though the university has no general covenant against CIA funding, its canons do require disclosure of any such grants and forbid outside contracts restricting free dissemination of faculty research. Therefore, Spence announced, after much soul searching, Harvard has accepted Safran's "preference for stepping down as director" after two years of "scholarly leadership." The dean announced he was disbanding the center's executive committee and added that Safran, who has been a professor of government at Harvard for 27 years, will retain tenure.

Spence's gingerly treatment of the case did not sit well with some of his academic colleagues. They point out that over the past two decades Harvard, Berkeley and a host of other schools, wary of Government influence but still eager for federal research grants, have set up policies to ensure that no research is secret or subject to prior review. Now the Safran incident has resurrected the

thorny question of whose research money is clean and whose is not. One of the Harvard center's defrocked committeemen, Richard N. Frye, denounced the Spence report as a "whitewash" that ignored the broad effect on scholarly integrity. An academic who bowed out of the conference claimed, "People in the Middle East to whom we must have access would never trust us again."

Spence allowed that "the university owes an apology to scholars in the field" but conceded that not all of the blame should be heaped on Safran. It seems that when Safran signed the CIA contract for his book nearly four years ago, he told then Dean Henry Rosovsky about it. Somehow, Rosovsky's office never got around to responding. Last week Safran,



Safran: stepping down

angry at the prolonged controversy and the pressure to resign, stoutly defended his integrity and scholarship: "I have received requests for my book . . . from the Saudi embassy in Washington."

Safran acknowledged his "mistake" in not announcing agency funding of the conference at the outset. However, he insisted, the money came with no strings attached. He therefore considered it "analogous to the contributions made to the center by private corporations and individuals."

At week's end Harvard clearly hoped the furor would subside. But the noise level of the debate suggested it would take some time for the wounds to heal. Said the unremitting Frye: "This is a crisis. I don't know if the Middle East center will ever recover from this." —*By Ezra Bowen. Report edited by Timothy Loughran/Boston*

### Joy in Gotham

*A woman dean for Columbia*

**W**hile Harvard's administration suffered through its embarrassment last week, the leadership at another Ivy League school, Columbia, was in a festive mood over the elevation of Barbara Aronstein Black from professor of legal history to dean of the law school. Black, 52 and the mother of three children, succeeds Benno C. Schmidt Jr., who in December was named president of Yale. Her promotion marks a significant academic milestone: she becomes the first woman ever to head one of the nation's blue-ribbon law schools. "She's a woman for all sea-



Barbara Aronstein Black: stepping up

sons," proclaimed Columbia President Michael Sovern, calling her appointment "just one facet of an extraordinarily gifted human being." And in a pointed comment he added, "She is too solid a choice to allow her being a woman to count. I wanted the best possible person. And it was she."

When Black first entered Columbia Law School as a student back in the fall of 1953, women made up only 15% of the class, which incidentally included a young student named Michael Sovern. One of her more demanding mentors at the time was Professor Charles L. Black Jr., whom she eventually married. After Charles transferred to Yale in 1956, Barbara followed him to New Haven, Conn., where she rose through the faculty ranks to become an associate professor of law. In 1984 she returned to Columbia as a full professor.

When Sovern first called her to talk about the deanship, he opened the conversation by saying, "The class of '55 strikes again!" Indeed, Sovern purposely made a quick strike after Schmidt's announced departure. At a time when law-school applications outside the Ivy League and a handful of other elite universities are down 20% from 1982, he wanted to avoid the impression of a store left untended.

In fact, Black's new store is thriving. After half a dozen years of rebuilding a somewhat depleted faculty, raising women's enrollment to 39% and lifting its endowment substantially, the Columbia Law School is at a peak that Black fully intends to maintain and possibly elevate. In so doing, she will also be striving toward another, more personal goal. "Now," she says, "I would like to help persuade society that it should not be as difficult as it is for women to succeed at home and at work both."

Meanwhile, it seems, the class of '55 has struck once more. This June, Charles Black will leave Yale's Sterling professorship to take up a teaching job at Columbia under a new boss. Yes, it's his former pupil, Dean Barbara Black. ■

# 2 Jan 86 **Scholar to Quit Post at Harvard Over C.I.A. Tie Middle East Expert Will Keep Faculty Position**

By FOX BUTTERFIELD  
Special to The New York Times

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., Jan. 1 — The director of Harvard University's Center for Middle Eastern Studies will resign after an internal investigation into his acceptance of research funds from the Central Intelligence Agency, the school disclosed today.

A. Michael Spence, dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, said that Nadav Safran, director of the Middle Eastern center, would step down at the end of the academic year.

In a six-page report on the investigation, made available today, Mr. Spence said that the university itself was to blame for failing to act when Mr. Safran first informed it of a C.I.A. contract to help finance a book on Saudi Arabia. The contract contained restrictions that violated Harvard's rules on research sponsored by outside organizations, Mr. Spence concluded.

But Mr. Spence also concluded that Mr. Safran had been wrong not to disclose that the C.I.A. had provided money for a conference on Islamic fundamentalism at Harvard last fall.

## **Will Retain Professorship**

Mr. Spence said he had accepted Mr. Safran's resignation "with sadness and deep reservation." Mr. Safran will remain a tenured professor at Harvard, where Mr. Spence said "his erudition and objectivity as a scholar have not been questioned."

Mr. Safran's use of C.I.A. funds touched off a controversy at Harvard, among Middle Eastern scholars and in some Arab countries.

There has also been bitter debate within the Harvard administration over Mr. Spence's report, school officials said, with some faculty members urging stronger action against Mr. Safran. Both Mr. Safran and his critics expressed disappointment today at the way Mr. Spence handled the matter.

Mr. Safran contended the report exonerated him of charges that he had tried to cover up \$107,430 in C.I.A. funds for his book, "Saudia Arabia: The Ceaseless Quest for Security," and another \$45,700 in C.I.A. support for the conference. But Mr. Safran said Harvard had been "cold-hearted at best" in failing to prevent the dispute from damaging his reputation.

## **Report Termed a 'Whitewash'**

However, Richard N. Frye, a professor of Iranian studies, described the report as a "whitewash" that examined only the "technical question" of whether Mr. Safran had complied with Harvard's requirements for reporting research funds.

"The broader moral issue of what he did was not addressed," Mr. Frye said. "From my knowledge of the field, this is a crisis."

"People in the field now have to worry about their lives being in danger, and all Harvard said is that it was a little mistake," Mr. Frye asserted.

On the other hand, Marshall I. Goldman, associate director of the Russian Research Center at Harvard who is a professor of economics at Wellesley College, said the report was "a very moderate, judicious attempt to heal the wounds."

The disclosures about Mr. Safran's acceptance of C.I.A. money "have affected the credibility of all of Harvard," Mr. Goldman said.

But Mr. Goldman said the case was a "tragedy" because Mr. Safran "had really helped make the Middle Eastern center a better place" in the two years he has run it.

In his report, Mr. Spence acknowledged that the publicity over Mr. Safran's handling of the C.I.A. funds "may have caused a loss of confidence in the center and in the university's ability to follow effectively its policies in areas that are crucial to scholars."

## **Disclosure of Financing**

Mr. Spence's report found that Mr. Safran had violated Harvard's guidelines by not disclosing that he had a contract with the C.I.A. to sponsor the conference and by not informing the participants of the agency's role.

Mr. Safran said today that he viewed the C.I.A. as being "like any other source of funds" and that he felt there was no need to disclose the financing.

Harvard has no rule prohibiting professors from accepting research grants from any Government agency, including the C.I.A., Mr. Spence pointed out. But Harvard does have strict rules requiring its faculty members to notify the school whenever they receive Government or corporate funds and insure that the money does not carry any conditions that would abridge academic freedom.

In the case of the book on Saudia Arabia, Mr. Spence said Mr. Safran notified Henry Rosovsky, who was then the dean of the faculty, of the contract with the C.I.A. in May 1982, a week after signing it.

## **Restrictions Reported**

Mr. Spence concluded that Mr. Safran had called attention to provisions that gave the C.I.A. the right to review and censor the manuscript and that prohibited Mr. Safran from disclosing the source of his funds to his publisher. Both conditions were in violation of Harvard's rules.

But Dean Spence said, "As far as I have been able to determine, he received no response" from Mr. Rosovsky. As a result, the university did not examine the contract and did not point out to Mr. Safran that it was an "institutional" contract involving Harvard and its rules, not merely an "individual" contract, as Mr. Safran has contended.

"These are clearly administrative errors in the faculty of arts and sciences, and not those of Professor Safran," Mr. Spence concluded.

Mr. Rosovsky concurred in an interview that his office had made "an administrative error" "I regret that,"

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## COMMENTARY

# All parties damaged in CIA-Safran affair

*Agency, professor and Harvard hurt by publicity, as is the image of universities in eyes of the public*

By Leonard Bushkoff  
Special to the Globe

**T**he Great Intelligence Wars that filled headlines last year with tales of spies, double agents, defectors and re-defectors received a small Cambridge footnote in mid-October, with the news that professor Nadav Safran, the director of Harvard's Center for Middle Eastern Studies, had secretly received some \$150,000 from the Central Intelligence Agency to pay for a conference of Islamic fundamentalism and to finish a book on Saudi Arabia.

The minor academic rumpus this triggered is obviously not comparable to a big-league intelligence scandal. However, last week, A. Michael Spence, dean of the Harvard faculty of arts and sciences, issued a report that said Safran erred by not initially disclosing that he had received CIA funding for his conference; that Safran was resigning as the Middle Eastern center director, effective in June; and that he apologized for Harvard's error in not taking action when Safran reported his CIA contract for the book.

The fallout from all this has been remarkable: When Harvard stumbles, the world takes notice. Reports have appeared in the American and British press, in Israel's authoritative *Ha'aretz*, in a Kuwaiti paper and even in the British Broadcasting Corporation's overseas service.

## Harvard embarrassed

The controversy has embarrassed Harvard, brought critical letters from outraged alumni and stained the Harvard University Press, which published Safran's book and which now stands as the first university press to be publicly linked to the CIA.

That's not all. The furor has badly hurt Safran's reputation for disinterested scholarship and that of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, as well. It split the center into a small, pro-Safran faction and a larger group of angry opponents; triggered concern on all sides regarding the reception the center's faculty and students may receive in the Middle East; raised fears lest outside financing of the center may dry up; and undermined the center's discreet efforts, over the years, at bridge-building to Middle Eastern moderates, some of whom now fear the dangers of being tarred with the CIA brush.

The furor has provided new ammunition for anti-Americanism among Middle Eastern intellectuals, while reinforcing the widespread assumption that foreign scholars aren't always what they seem to be. Americans, with our stereotype of the dotty professor, may find this laughable, but it isn't: Much evidence goes the other way.

The most famous intelligence officer of all time - T. E. Lawrence - learned how to blend into the Arab landscape while on archeological digs in Syria as an Oxford student. Documents in London's Public Records Office reveal that Ann Lambton, a highly-regarded British scholar of modern Iran, played a small but helpful part in British plans to smash - by arms, if necessary - the Mossadegh government during 1951, and the late Robert Zaehner (subsequently the Spaulding Professor of Eastern Religions and Ethics) actually took leave from Oxford to serve as MI6 (the British CIA) station chief in Tehran during 1951-52.

Closer to home, we find that Donald Wilber, whose standard textbook, "Iran: Past and Present," has gone through nine



The fallout from revelations about the relationship between Harvard professor Nadav Safran, above, and the CIA has been remarkable. When Harvard stumbles, the world takes notice.

editions with the Princeton University Press, has openly spoken of his long role as CIA consultant, particularly during the 1953 CIA coup against Mossadegh. And Richard Cottam, a political scientist at the University of Pittsburgh, has said he served as a CIA specialist on Iran during 1953-58, before turning against the agency's manipulations.

## CIA also a loser

The scholar, writer, or free-lance journalist, whose profession provides both expertise and cover at very low cost, is a good intelligence catch - or was, until Third World governments caught on

## POLITICS

# A Texan's Rx for what ails the

*There's an angry army of populists out there that is the party's natural constituency.*

Americans may be blind to this: Middle Easterners are not.

The CIA also emerges badly from the Safran affair. Ignore for a moment the moral aspects of secret contracts and rule-breaking. Simply consider the competence — or lack of it — of the Contracts Office in the Directorate of Intelligence, which probably drafted the stipulation that Safran's research be kept secret. Here is the typical failing of intelligence middle managers in all governments, basing actions on assumptions that a child could demolish. True with the Bay of Pigs; true with the Phoenix program in Vietnam; true now with this minor academic rumpus. So elaborate a research project as Safran's book, involving various graduate students and secretaries over the years, would certainly precipitate trouble in so chatty and open, yet so intense and ideologically divided a place as the Center for Middle Eastern Studies. Only in the closed, inward-facing intelligence subculture, where mental lockstep and lack of imagination mesh with security considerations to exclude outsiders with inconvenient questions, could so obvious a danger be overlooked.

Had the CIA managers even understood the agency's own history, particularly the outcry in 1967 over its long and secret subsidizing of the National Student Association, they would have known better. The hard-nosed CIA professionals, for whom secrets really matter, had never liked this arrangement. Student leaders, they contended, are talkative, unschooled in secrecy, vulnerable to pangs of conscience; suppose one goes public? And one did: "Ramparts" ran the story: the country was shocked; and a network of CIA fronts and fake foundations was swept away. Either this lesson was forgotten or creating a link to Harvard's Center was seen as worth the risk.

Here lies the heart of the matter. For the CIA began striving, under Stansfield Turner in 1977-80, to rebuild the university connections that had been damaged in the mid-1970s. A Harvard beachhead would certainly help, impressing academicians elsewhere and providing access to Middle East students and visitors, as well as potential graduate student recruits for the Office of Near Eastern and South Asian Analysis in the Directorate of Intelligence. Such connections matter to the agency, whose morale suffered badly

ly from the criticism Congress and the media dished out in the mid-1970s. Now, sniped at by the far right for being insufficiently anticommunist, and always fearful of what the pendulum swings of American politics may bring, the agency may well be cultivating any influential academic friends it can find.

Ironically enough, congressional attempts to liberalize the CIA are particularly to blame. Angered by the Iranian intelligence "failure" of 1978-79, and oblivious to the inherent unpredictability of great events, Congress and the media blast the handful of government experts on Iran for being inbred and myopic. Had they systematically consulted the academicians? If not, why not?

If only to cover its flanks against such congressional criticism, the intelligence community is now open and responsive on the Middle East.

Safran's book was lavishly funded. He began in 1979-80 with a \$25,000 grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, whose official in charge is now angered at being linked to a CIA-funded book. Safran got \$107,000 more from the CIA in 1982-83, with \$46,000 to him personally, and \$20,000 apiece — nearly an assistant professor's pay — for two research assistants.

No doubt Safran's remuneration from this is paltry when compared to the big bucks that professors in science, business or economics may make on the side. But this hardly fits the idealistic picture that many Americans still have of their universities, Harvard above all, as representing something better than individual entrepreneurship, of cash on the barrel-head for knowledge sold.

In our secular age, the great universities have largely succeeded the churches in popular esteem; hence their tax-free status. Should we instead regard them as ivy-covered industrial parks, with professors and graduate students eager for their share?

The unimpeded search for truth is central for scholarship and the universities that sustain it. Secret contracts and funding, the right to censor, a conference called under obscure pretenses — all distort that search, undercutting the moral foundations of the university and deceiving those who believe in its ideals.

Leonard Bushkoff writes frequently for Focus.

## Democratic Party

ity; these are the people it must speak to

of that for a trendier tone in our politics